

**Lem, the Environment & Development Society of
Ethiopia**

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Executive Report

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1. Introduction

Since the 5th General Assembly which was held in Feb. 2002, the Society has made a considerable effort into two directions. One is to minimize pending liabilities of previous years and the other is to put the Society on the right track in relation to its very existence and objectives. For this reason the Board of Directors and the committee elected by the 5th General Assembly to develop future strategies of the Society, has made a number of meetings. And yet the process has continued.

Along with these, the ongoing projects on ‘Community Based Alternative Construction Resources-Funded by the Swedish Embassy, ‘A People Based Environment & Population Integrated Project’-Funded by Packard Foundation and ‘Promotion of Bio-gas Technology- an Appropriate Technology Alternatives- Funded by Finland Embassy has been implemented according to the annual plan of operation.

Year 2001 Auditing was made lately for the Society’s accountant has died. According to the Audit Report there has been improvement except liabilities being waiting decision. Among the liabilities was compensation of former employees of the Society. Fortunately, more than 75% of the liabilities has been discharged after the auditing.

Some members of the Society has kept their commitment through different approaches. A few of them keep in touch with the Society and give their advice and comments while others are willing to attend different fora on behalf of Lem while others has given substantial financial support. As the result of the cumulative effort made its members the Society is still progressing ahead and it is on the list of best local NGOs, mentioned by higher government officials.

2. Major Effected & Planned Activities

2.1 Phased Out Activities

- 2.1.1 **‘Toke Kombolcha & Toke Eressa Communities Alternative Resources Promotion Project:** - This project has been carried out by Ambo Mud Technology Training Center-Ambo in collaboration with the above mentioned communities and Ambo Woreda Agricultural Development Office. While the implementation of the project should have been started in early January 2002, due to the passive bureaucratic process actual implementation started in April 2002. As discussed in the previous report its main objective is to popularize the technology through the construction of model houses, beehives and energy saving mud stoves in the rural communities. The components of the project have been training on the technology, construction of models and provision of locally made construction tools. Though evaluation is not yet conducted we have tried to gather the opinion of

the target beneficiaries. It has been encouraging. We are waiting for terminal evaluation, otherwise this project has already phased out.

- 2.1.2 **Promotion of Bio-gas Technology through schools:-** Beneficiaries of this project have been 4 high schools of Addis Ababa. The main objective of this project is to promote the technology, which has the advantage of addressing environmental health problem & energy problem as well as to be used as demonstration sites. The bio-gas energy is generated from the schools' latrine. The energy is used for cooking in the cafeteria and home economics department (for the two vocational schools), and serves in the labs for the other two. This project too is not evaluated to include comments.

2.2 On going Activity

'A People Based Environment & Population Integrated Project:- As mentioned in last year's report this project is implemented in 2 Zones of Oromia-W. Shoa & Jimma and in 3 Zones of Amhara – S. Wollo, Oromia & N. Shoa Zones in 10 high schools and their surrounding communities. It is expected that this project can be a corner stone in terms of Lem's long-term objectives as it includes the establishment of environmental groups of rural & urban communities. Two workshops on environment, population & development interrelationship awareness raising were conducted from May to June 2002. The duration of each workshop was 4 days and a total of 75 participants attended the workshops. Among the participants were 30 teachers (among them was one female), 35 former school Environmental Education & Protection Club members, who have either completed/drop outs from 10th grade or above and started leading their lives in their communities (among them 8 were female) and 10 experts from education, agriculture and health sectors.

2.3 Planned Projects

- 2.3.1 **Mud Technology and Alternative Conservation Technology Project:-** This is a project to be carried out under Ambo Mud Technology Training Center. The objective of this project is to promote mud technology as an alternative conservation technology through training of 20 homeless family heads (from both male & female 10 households) on the technology and the establishment of 10 model houses in Ambo town. This project is going to be funded by Japanese Embassy. It is delayed for the change of concerned authority in the embassy. Otherwise it would have been executed in the previous year.
- 2.3.2 **Solar Energy Partnership Project:-** This is a project of partnership with German NGOs and private companies on the promotion of Solar

Energy technologies through organized needy community groups. The objective of this project is to improve the livelihood conditions of rural communities and conserve the forestry resources. Here Lem plays more of facilitation role.

- 2.3.3 **Environmental Policy Advocacy:-** This project has been designed as per the need of the Society targeting policy makers /concerned parliamentarians and professionals at different levels. The objective of this project is to pursue policy makers for sustainable development by the emplacement of sound environment & development policies. Along with this it incorporates the establishment of thousands of Lem groups at local level. The proposal has been submitted to The Royal Netherlands Embassy, Norwegian Embassy and Ireland Embassy. Still no potential donor has been received.

3. Partnership

Lem Ethiopia has been and/or has good relationship and partnership with GOs and NGOs (both local and international), with those embassies that have special interest in environment & development, professional societies, civil societies and communities. Among the major GOs with this regard are MoE and its respective Bureaus and departments, DPPC and its respective Bureaus and departments, Environmental Protection Authority, Addis Ababa Environmental Protection Bureau and Addis Ababa Council, Ambo town administration council, etc. From NGOs are Agri-service Ethiopia-Forum for Sustainable Land Use, Center for Human Environment, Forum for Environment, etc., and from international NGOs; Pact Ethiopia, David & Lucil Packard Foundation etc; among the embassies are Finland Embassy and Sweden Embassy, etc. Still a number of other private enterprises and Civil societies from abroad has shown interest to work with Lem. Communities surrounding the ten high schools show interest to work with Lem too.

4. Budget Utilization

During year 2002 more than 98% of the income of the Society has been from projects mentioned above. Membership contribution at the same time was very low. But due to the follow up and useful advise of Board of Directors with very minimum manpower and overhead costs that has been possible to run the office. Accordingly it has been possible to use more than 85% of the funds available to projects. On the other side Liabilities has been reduced almost by 50%. The financial system of Lem is as per standards of accounting and computerized. Refer Audit Report 2001.

5. Problems & Constraints Encountered

The main problems & constraints encountered during the previous year has been financial resource constraint compared to the Society's goals and objectives and the extent of the prevailing environmental degradation, delayance of project appraisal and signing of agreements from some of the concerned government institutions side, less interest by donors to the issue of environment.

Lack of clear policy and guidelines concerning personnel management is another problem in the office management sector that created too many loads on two of the staff of the Society. Being a citizen of this country we are challenged by the number of requests for financial contribution from different angles to those few who are able to support such initiation.

6. Conclusion

The existing situation of the Society along with the internal & external environment is a good opportunity to head forward towards its strategy, i.e., to be real and strong community organization. Strengthening partnership with key stakeholders of the Society is essential for effectiveness.

Thus, this is the time to strengthen and lead the Society towards its end goals. We believe that this is not a simple task, it needs to keep on commitments and try to change good wills and ideas into action.